

Holy Trinity Sunningdale
Sunday October 11, 2026 – 19th Sunday after Trinity
Moses – The Freedom Fighter
Readings -Exodus 5:1-9; 19-6;1 & Ephesians 6:10-20

Old Testament passages are interesting to read because they read more like fairy tales – with the hero facing tough times from which he/she will emerge triumphant. Everything always seems to work out in the end and they lived happily ever after! Examples abound including Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Esther, Hannah, David, even Job! But, that's not real life!

Moses is more my real-life type of guy and today we are considering Moses – the freedom fighter, but again, is he really that?

He was born at a time a genocidal Pharaoh was killing all Israelite male babies. Moses escaped death through a daring plan by his mother. He was saved by the daughter of Pharaoh who then handed him back to his mother to be nursed until he was old enough to return to Pharaoh's daughter who adopted him and raised him as an Egyptian. You don't need to be a psychologist to know how traumatic and confusing life must have been for young Moses. Think of the resentment his family would have faced from people who didn't get to keep their sons. He would also have faced enormous discrimination living as a Hebrew inside Pharaoh's palace. He will have absolutely no sense of identity or belonging! No wonder he thought if he killed an Egyptian, he might be accepted by his own people! Of course, Pharaoh heard and wanted his head, so he ran for his life!

After 40 years of quiet and peace with foreigners, minding his business, God shows up "Volun-telling" him to go and save his people from Egypt. Any wonder he was reluctant!

Our reading starts with Moses giving Pharaoh God's message. "Is that so," retorted Pharaoh. "And who is the Lord? Why should I listen to him and let Israel go?" Pharaoh then made life so difficult for the Israelites that they confronted Moses, "May the Lord judge and punish you for making us stink before Pharaoh and his officials." Moses went back to God and protested, "Why have you brought all this trouble on your own people, Lord? Why did you send me?" This became a regular reoccurrence in Moses' life.

It took 10 plagues – blood; frogs; gnats; flies; death of livestock; boils; hailstones; locust; darkness and finally the death of firstborns for Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. Why so much suffering was required bothers me!

But let's keep to Moses – his life didn't get any easier or better and he never reached the promised land even though, he did mostly whatever God told him. He might have gotten angry once or twice, by my reckoning, Moses stood head & shoulder above many people in the Bible who got their happy endings. The Bible says he spoke to God face-to-face, yet he died in the desert! But then, that's life!

At the age of 32, Andrew was dying. The doctors had caught the aggressive non-Hodgkin's lymphoma early, and he was reassured that 90% of patients respond to chemotherapy. He didn't. More aggressive chemotherapy followed, with a 70% chance of success. It didn't work. Then he received immunotherapy which had a 99% of success rate. He was in the 1%. Unlucky at every turn, Andrew struggled to see God's goodness. But then, that's life! (Our Daily Bread – Sat. Aug. 22, 2026)
Life is hard, but it has not singled out you or me for punishment!

Moses is a type of Christ. Life didn't let up on Christ just as it didn't let up on Moses. And we are called to be Christlike, so life won't let up on us too. Paul knew suffering because life didn't let up on him. He wrote Ephesians from prison, yet he wrote about how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is. How was he able to do this?

Paul tells us how in Ephesians 6. "Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power," by putting on all of God's armour so that we can stand firm against all the strategies of the devil or of the kingdom of this world. We belong to the kingdom of God. The kingdom of heaven is the abiding presence of God with his people. No wonder Jesus taught us to pray for God's kingdom to come.

When God abides with us, we have every piece of his armour on us – truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation and the word of God. With this armour, we are able to stand when the day of evil comes, or we are under attack from the kingdom of the world.

God's sovereignty over the world is seen in how he carries us by his strength through the storms of life. As Christians, we must prayerfully put on our spiritual armour daily. That is why daily prayer is an essential discipline for Christians. In prayer we ask God into our lives, not that he ever leaves us, but we remind ourselves of his presence and his armour. God's presence brings us his peace and joy even in the middle of the darkest moments that life can throw at us.

Let us pray together this collect:

O God the author of peace and concord, to know you is eternal life, to serve you is perfect freedom. Defend us your servants from all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in your defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dolapo Ogunbawo